

THE

# HISTORIAN

OF HANCOCK COUNTY

Bay Saint Louis, Mississippi

November 2007

## COMING EVENTS AT LOBRANO HOUSE

The November luncheon meeting will be held on Thursday, November 15, 2007, at noon at the Kate Lobrano House. The speaker will be Kay Gough of Bay Books. Reservations may be made by calling 467-4090. Please call by noon on Wednesday, November 14, 2007, to assure your reservation and to help us plan seating which is limited to sixty people. The price of the lunch is \$7.00 payable at the door.

The main order of business at this meeting is the election of board members to serve from January 2008 through December 2010. The nominating committee will submit its recommendations, but we are also asking the general membership for nominations. If you would like to serve or to recommend someone, please call 467-4090 or nominate from the floor at the November meeting. The offices being filled this year are president, 2nd vice president, publicity chairperson, and historian.

We are in desperate need of typists to help us catalogue the vast amount of information we have in the society. Please call to volunteer.



## THE ADMIRALTY ANCHOR

By  
Russell Guerin

Recent visitors to the Lobrano House may have noticed a new presence in our garden. It is a six-foot high, cast iron anchor of the "admiralty" type. It probably weighs several hundred pounds, and indeed it took a wrecker to pick it up and deliver it to us. Soon, it will take its logical place next to the Pass Marianne light which al-

ready graces our little garden.

Credit for the donation of this large artifact from our past goes to Jules "Poss" LaFrance. He was the subject of an interview done three years ago for *The Historian* at the suggestion of Tim Kellar. Tim knew that Poss had many stories to tell as he was then ninety-one years old and had spent most of his adult life in the marshes around Ansley, shrimp-ing, catching bait, and managing his LaFrance marina. Of course, he weathered a few hurricanes in between.

Poss is now "pushing

This is a picture of the "Admiralty Anchor" as it once stood in the front yard of "Poss" LaFrance at the corner of Bud Ladner and Lakeshore Roads.



## THE

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OF HANCOCK COUNTY

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**MISSION STATEMENT**

"TO PRESERVE THE GENERAL AND ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY OF HANCOCK COUNTY AND TO PRESERVE THE KATE LOBRANO HOUSE AND COLLECTIONS THEREIN; TO RESEARCH AND INTERPRET LIFE IN HANCOCK COUNTY; AND TO ENCOURAGE AN APPRECIATION OF AND INTEREST IN HISTORICAL PRESERVATION."

ninety-four." He is as tall and straight as he was at the time of that first interview. In spite of Katrina's surge having flooded the area, he is now back in his rebuilt home on Lower Bay Road.

In the 2004 interview, he told the story of the anchor. Back in the '60's, sometime after he had bought his Biloxi schooner, the *Mabel L*, Poss was aware that shrimpers would catch—and sometimes lose—their nets on something in the Pearl River, west of the railroad bridge. One time, while catching bait, it happened to Poss. He pulled and pulled and would back up to the obstacle until he nearly flooded the deck of the *Mabel L*. Presently, another shrimper observed the problem and offered help. Together, they

pulled, and after making small headway, the anchor finally gave up to the *Mabel L*'s winch.

No one knows how long that anchor had been on the bottom. Poss knew that at one time, before his time, there had been an old oyster factory nearby. On the bank, he remembers, there had been the remnant of an old schooner. It had been a derelict a long time, finally consumed by repeated marsh fires over the years. Poss theorizes that the anchor might have come from it, but whatever boat had used that anchor had to have been a good size.

Poss had mentioned in 2004 that he desired to give his anchor to a museum and had in fact offered it to one of the maritime museums in a neighboring county. Knowing that it had not



Without the gracious help of Danny Page, we could not have moved the anchor to the Loblano House.

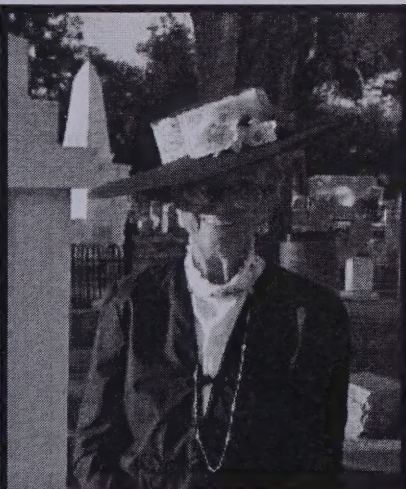


yet been claimed by the time of Katrina and that the museum now no longer existed, a representative of the Hancock County Historical Society visited Poss recently. The suggestion was made that the anchor was indeed a Hancock County artifact, at which time Poss immediately extended his hand and said, "It's yours."

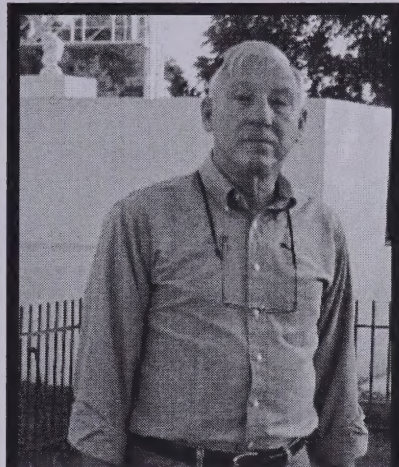
True to his heritage, that's the way things were done in Poss's time.

From there, it was a matter of contacting a wrecker service. One call to Danny Page, the new owner of the Mike Perniciaro shop, was all that was needed. Danny agreed to pick it up the next day. Graciously, he donated his time and services to the Hancock County Historical Society.

Research shows that admiralty anchors were first used by the British navy from about 1831. They continued in use, with a few modifications, until about 1860. If anyone can add to our knowledge of the use of this type and size of anchor in our waters, please contact this writer or the Historical Society.



Pat Cucullu as  
Kate Lobrano



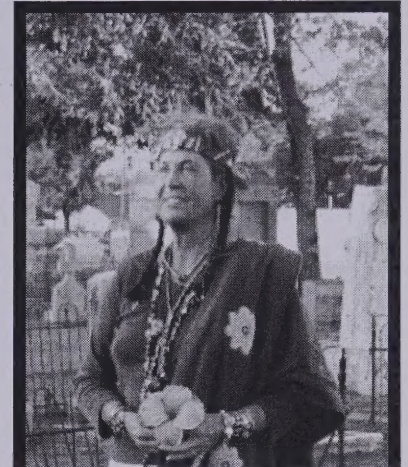
Robert Delcuze as  
The Landrieu/Delcuze Family

## 2007 HALLOWEEN TOUR

By  
Eddie Coleman

The Fourteenth Annual Halloween Tour sponsored by the Hancock County Historical Society was held at Cedar Rest Cemetery on October 31, 2007. With the help of many volunteers and the dedication of many fine actors, this year's tour was a rousing success. Guests were greeted at the cemetery by Charles Gray, Executive Director of the Society. Tour guides led visitors through the cemetery stopping along the way for actors portraying persons buried there to tell highlights of the characters' lives.

The apparition of **Kate Lobrano** was the first character to greet guests. She owned the house which is now the home of the Hancock County Historical Society and with her husband maintained residences in Pointe a la Hache, LA, and Bay Saint Louis. A spirit representing the **Landrieu/Delcuze** family was

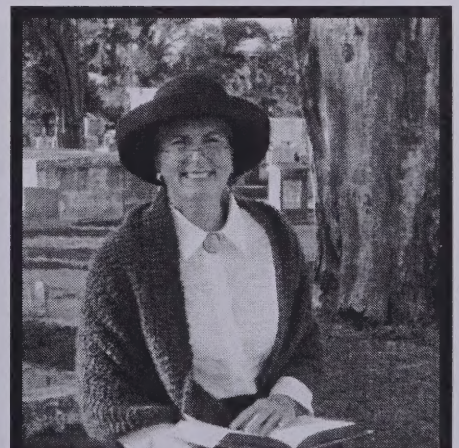


Annie Singleton as  
Powhattan Robertson

the next to appear. He related a brief history of his many family members buried in adjacent plots in the cemetery.

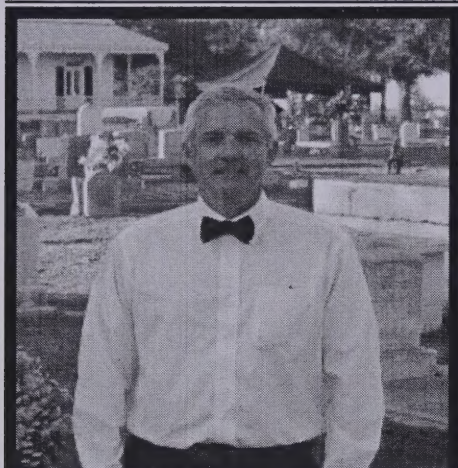
Standing near the slab which covers her grave, the vision of **Powhattan Robertson** explained how she, an Indian maiden, came to be buried in this cemetery. Her remains were moved to Cedar Rest from the old St. Charles Street graveyard. The specter of **Louise Crawford** was the next character to relate her story. She was the first librarian of the library system begun by the W. P. A. in Bay Saint Louis in 1934.

Moving toward the back



Barbara Warner as  
Louise Crawford





Scott Bagley as  
Rene de Montluzin, Sr.



Penny Kelly as  
Ginger Burke Paradise

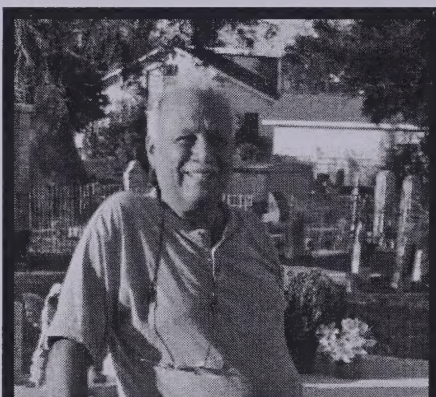


Ava Sevin as  
Corine Carco

of the cemetery, visitors encountered the spiritual presence of **Rene de Montluzin, Sr.** Standing before the family crypt, he explained that he had inherited the drugstore he operated on Beach Boulevard from his father. The incorporeal being of **Medina Chadwick Weston**, the only woman soldier buried in the cemetery, appeared to the tourists and spoke of her life in Bay Saint Louis, having moved here after the Civil War.

With tambourine and other accoutrements, the phantasm of the gypsy queen, **Ginger Burke Paradise**, reported on the life she lived in Bay Saint Louis and ex-

plained that she is buried in an unknown area of the cemetery as is the custom of gypsies. The ethereal appearance of **Midshipman William P. Canby** explained the naval action he saw



Paul LaViolette as  
Midshipman William P. Canby

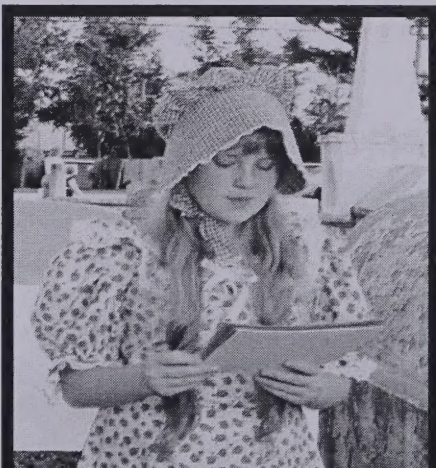
in the Mississippi Sound during the War of 1812.

The spiritual presence of young **Lillian Poillion** greeted the travelers. Unfortunately, she died at quite a young age of eating too many green apples. The mother of several children, **Corine Carco** appeared as an incorporeal being and communicated that she had spent time in a mental institution after the birth of her last child.

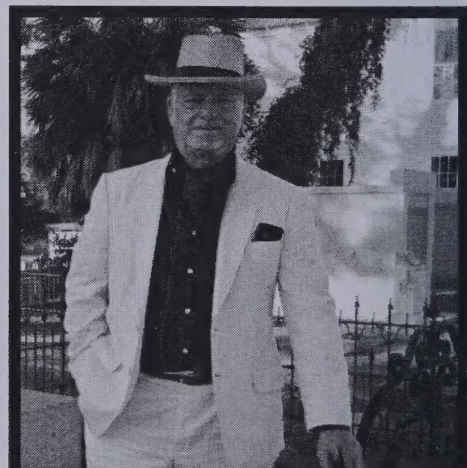
Bringing the tour to an end, the spiritual form of **R. R. Perkins** spoke of his being president and manager of Imperial Naval Stores and president of Mer-



Katy Gift as  
Medina Chadwick Weston



Cayla-Ann Marie Kelton as  
Lillian Poillion

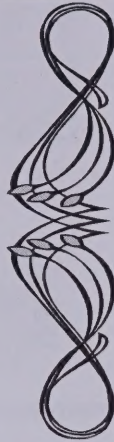


Tom Aicklen as  
R. R. Perkins



chants Bank. He proudly displayed his tombstone, the largest in the cemetery.

After all of the guests had left the cemetery, the spirits returned to their respective resting places, be they grave, sepulcher, or tomb. We look forward to seeing which phantasms will appear next year to entertain us.



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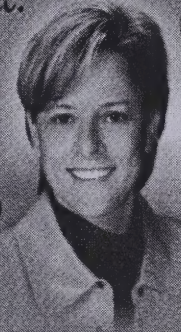
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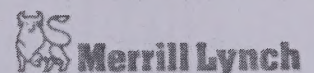
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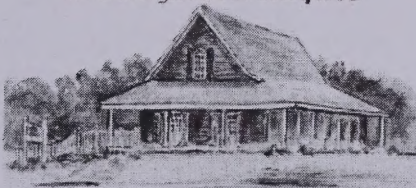
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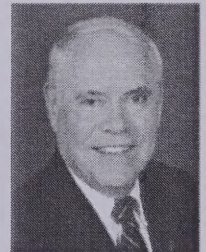
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